

Message Text

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PAGE 01 COLOMB 00271 171239Z POSS DUPE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 0271

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: AORG, WMO, CE

SUBJ: WMO: POTENTIAL US CANDIDATE FOR WMO SECRETARY GENERAL:
DR. ROBERT M. WHITE

REF: 77 STATE A-4947

1. DRAWING ON REFAIR, THE EMBASSY PREPARED A THIRD PERSON NOTE REQUESTING THE SUPPORT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SRI LANKA FOR THE POTENTIAL CANDIDACY OF DR. WHITE IN THE EVENT DR. DAVIES DECIDES NOT TO STAND FOR RE-ELECTION AS WMO SECRETARY GENERAL. THE NOTE WAS SENT JANUARY 4, 1978, TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS WITH A COPY TO K.D.N. DE SILVA, DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF METEOROLOGY AND SRI LANKA'S PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE WMO. ALTHOUGH THE MINISTRY HAS NOT YET REPLIED, DE SILVA RESPONDED AS FOLLOWS: QUOTE. WE HAVE BEEN AWARE OF THE VERY HIGH QUALIFICATIONS OF DR. WHITE AND OF HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO INTERNATIONAL METEOROLOGY OVER A LONG PERIOD OF TIME. IN THE EVENT OF DR. DAVIES' DECISION TO STEP DOWN, I ASSURE YOU THAT SRI LANKA'S DELEGATE TO THE EIGHT CONGRESS OF WMO IN 1979 WILL BEAR IN MIND DR. WHITE'S EMINENT SUITABILITY AS DR. DAVIES' SUCCESSOR WHEN THE ELECTION OF THE NEW SECRETARY-GENERAL IS TAKEN UP FOR CONSIDERATION. END QUOTE.

2. IN A SEPARATE COMMUNICATION, DE SILVA'S DEPUTY, R. MAHADEVA, WROTE TO THE ECON OFFICER SAYING: QUOTE. SPEAKING FOR MYSELF, CONFIDENTIAL

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I THINK DR. ROBERT M. WHITE IS PROBABLY THE MOST QUALIFIED METEOROLOGIST TO SUCCEED DR. DAVIES. OTHER SPONSORING COUNTRIES WILL ALSO SOLICIT SRI LANKA'S SUPPORT FOR THEIR CANDIDATES, BUT THIS DEPARTMENT WILL BE CONSULTED BEFORE A DECISION IS MADE. IN THE PRESENT POLITICAL CLIMATE THERE IS EVERY POSSIBILITY THAT SRI LANKA WILL SUPPORT DR. WHITE. END QUOTE.
WRIGGINS

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